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The Capers of Homer Capehart

Back in 1949 Harvard economist John Kenneth Galbraith wrote a pamphlet for the National Planning Association. In it he soberly evaluated the dimensions of the Communist challenge to Western Europe. It was a thoughtful document designed, among other things, to challenge the complacent view that the Communist tide could be easily repulsed. Too many people, Galbraith warned, underestimated the Communists' success in convincing large areas of the world that they had the answers to age-old economic grievances and nationalist strivings.

Far from being enthusiastic about the Communist gains, Galbraith suggested that free men formulate new and more imaginative programs to compete with the commissars.

Incidentally, when the Galbraith essay was released among those sponsoring the document were Ike's brother Milton and John Foster Dulles' brother Allen.

Now, six years later, Senator Homer Capehart (R-Ind.) has discovered the pamphlet. The other day he went on a national television show with a few excerpts carefully taken out of context, and pictured Galbraith as an admirer of the Communist system. Armed with this initial distortion, Capehart proceeded to denounce Senator Fulbright for letting Galbraith testify in the stock market inquiry.

How low can idioecy descend? Is it henceforth to be regarded as proof of subversion to suggest that the Communists are a formidable foe? Must all true patriots proclaim their belief that communism is washed up, routed, kaput? By Capehart logic it would seem to follow that there is no need for either military or economic measures to combat the Communist offensive. Who is subverting what?

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